United Nations A/59/PV.89

General Assembly
Fifty-ninth session

Official Records

89th plenary meeting
Friday, 8 April 2005, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ping ..... (Gabon)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Verbeke (Belgium), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda items 45 and 55 (*continued*)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Report of the Secretary-General (A/59/2005)

Mr. Dube (Botswana): My delegation wishes to express its gratitude to the President for convening this second phase of the informal consultations on the preparatory process for the high-level plenary meeting scheduled for September this year. We read with great care, and took note of, the well-written summary of his observations regarding the first phase of the informal consultations, issued on 24 February 2005. We believe that the rich contributions made by various delegation and the President's well thought-out summary have helped to set the stage for further, and even more focused, debate in second phase of our consultations.

In that respect, we welcome the report of the Secretary-General, which he has entitled "In larger freedom" (A/59/2005) and has issued in compliance with the request of Member States for a five-year progress report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration.

We also endorse the road map that the President has prepared to guide us as we consider the report of the Secretary-General as a whole and during the thematic consultations that will be held later on the clusters of issues, which the President will conduct with the assistance of the 10 facilitators selected for the process. We are especially gratified that the process of negotiation will continue to be conducted in an open, transparent and inclusive manner, so that, in the end, all delegations will feel that they have made a contribution towards the outcome of what is hoped will be a successful high-level plenary meeting. We also pledge our support to the President, as he pilots the draft resolution on the preparations for and organization of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly.

We thank the Secretary-General for his thought-provoking, and inevitably controversial, report. We also thank him for challenging us, the Member States, to "take the decisions that are needed" (*A/59/PV.83, p. 2*), when our heads of State or Government meet here in September. We may not share similar views on all the recommendations contained in his report but, at the very least, he has given us the basis upon which to discuss the urgent challenges now confronting the international community, and with regard to which bold and decisive action is required. My delegation intends to approach the issues raised and the

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recommendations contained in the report with an open mind.

We fully agree with the Secretary-General that his report must be considered as a whole package, not as an à la carte menu from which we can pick only the juicy recipes. Our hope is that, after all the talking, we here in this great Hall will at least find common ground on issues that need urgent implementation if the lofty ideas of the year 2000 are to have any meaning for our peoples, rich or poor, developed or underdeveloped. We shall approach these consultations with a view to sharing ideas about our common future. Getting 191 nations to agree on a common future is hard enough, but doing nothing because we fear that we can never reach consensus on the issues before us is worse.

We therefore associate ourselves with the statements made by the Permanent Representatives of Malawi on behalf of the African Union, Malaysia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77.

We will consider the report in its four main sections, as recommended by the Secretary-General. With respect to the sections entitled "Freedom from want" and "Freedom from fear, on security and development, we strongly believe that there is a nexus between development and our common security. That was well articulated in the Ezulwini Consensus, which is the common African position adopted by the African Union at its extraordinary Executive Council session on 8 March, when it considered the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (A/59/565).

We also believe that, as argued in the report of the Secretary-General, the issue of human rights merits close and careful study, especially with regard to the creation of a Human Rights Council to replace the Commission on Human Rights. That council's composition and mandate should be the subject of further intensive consultations.

The security concerns of the international community are genuine and require urgent attention. The African Union has also made known its strong position on terrorism, which we fully share. But we are even more alarmed by the insidious threats posed by landmines and small arms and light weapons, which are responsible for the maiming and killing of so many innocent civilians in Africa and Asia in the many conflicts there that the international community is still not able to stop.

The issue of conflicts and their prevention is pivotal if the continent of Africa is to rid itself of the accompanying devastation to its infrastructure and economy, not to mention the great suffering and displacement of large populations in areas of conflict. Conflict prevention is central to efforts to combat poverty and promote sustainable development. Peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding must therefore be reinvigorated by ensuring that peacekeeping operations include the added capacity to maintain peace long after the cessation of hostilities. Botswana therefore wholeheartedly supports the establishment of a Peacebuilding Commission with enough authority to play a pivotal role in post-conflict stabilization.

However, common security does not stop with the control of conventional and unconventional arms or with halting the proliferation of light weapons. Our common security is equally threatened by poverty, marginalization, poor governance and the spread of killer diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis. In our deliberations, whether we are considering the Secretary-General's report or our own ideas, we must focus on the practical measures and commitments that the high-level plenary meeting must agree on to give added impetus to the eradication of poverty and provide the resources that need to be invested in the public health sector to tackle HIV/AIDS, which now threatens the very survival of a substantial segment of the population of some nations. My delegation stands ready to share its ideas on those matters.

I turn now to the section of the Secretary-General's report dealing with global institutions, in which he refers to the need to strengthen the United Nations by making its principal organs more accountable and more democratic by improving their working methods and by restructuring the Secretariat and various agencies. We believe those reforms are long overdue if the United Nations is to be relevant as it faces the challenges of the twenty-first century.

The proposals to reform the Security Council have clearly caused a great deal of excitement among Member States and the general public, and there is great temptation to put that issue at the top of our

agenda. We must resist that temptation and deal with that issue together with others before us.

The revitalization of the General Assembly, as the chief deliberative policy-making body of the United Nations, is of critical importance to most of us. It is the forum wherein the voices of big and small have equal weight.

We fully support the Secretary-General's proposal to enable the Economic and Social Council to play a leading role in coordinating the implementation of coherent United Nations development policies.

Those are the initial views of my delegation on the report of the Secretary-General. We look forward to very enriching informal consultations and negotiations as we prepare for September.

Mr. Świtalski (Poland): Poland fully associates itself with the statement made earlier in this debate on behalf of the European Union. However, we would like to underscore some of the points made by the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg speaking on behalf of the European Union. Let me start with some general comments.

Poland welcomes with great appreciation the report of the Secretary-General dated 21 March (A/59/2005). In our opinion, it creates an excellent basis for in-depth discussion and for preparing a good outcome for the United Nations summit to be held this coming September.

We share the Secretary-General's overall approach, which builds upon the interlinkages among, and the mutually reinforcing nature of, security, development and human rights as the main pillars of our political agenda. It is obvious that, if we want to make a real breakthrough and effectively face the challenges of the twenty-first century, we need to succeed and make significant progress in all those areas in a mutually supporting way.

We are therefore convinced that all of the recommendations presented in the Secretary-General's report should be addressed in a comprehensive way. We all know very well that there are differences in the way in which threats and challenges are assessed, and those differences are sometimes very clear during debates in this Hall. Different countries and groups of countries have diverse interests. But we consider that the report reflects all of those different concerns and preoccupations very well. We must respond to all of them if we are truly to strive for the success of the September summit.

From the Polish point of view, certainly, some recommendations need more careful consideration and will have to be filled out with further detail. One example is the concept of subsidiarity — a concept that is very important to us, and one that seems to be gaining in importance. Other examples include the principle of legitimacy; accountability for both States and their leaders; the principle of solidarity; responsibility; and the stronger emphasis on the promotion of democracy.

We favour the visionary approach outlined in the report; it corresponds to the concept of a new political act for the United Nations for the twenty-first century, which Poland presented not long ago in the United Nations. We agree that we must be ambitious in our work and ensure that the decisions taken at this year's summit are bold and irreversible.

The section of the report entitled "Freedom from want" is one of the most important parts of the document. We share the Secretary-General's hope that the summit will result in concrete decisions aimed at fulfilling the commitments that we have undertaken over the years, which are crucial if we are to face the challenges awaiting the international community. To this end, the Secretary-General's report, with its concrete proposals and specific time frames in the area of development, constitutes a foundation for the smooth preparation for the summit and for a good outcome.

We fully share the report's recognition of the key role of good governance, democracy and the rule of law in development, as well as the importance of ensuring the national ownership and partnership in the process of implementing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). We welcome the fact that in his report the Secretary-General confirms that the principles of mutual responsibility and the accountability of development partners are key if we are to move the broad development agenda forward and successfully fight poverty and hunger.

The report's focus on the development agenda and the revival of our efforts in implementing the Millennium Development Goals prove that those issues are at the very heart of today's political agenda. At the same time, it is important to ensure that the MDGs are addressed in a broader perspective, as part of the larger

development agenda, including the implementation of the outcomes and decisions of the major United Nations conferences and summits, which are closely linked with the MDG agenda.

The concept of MDG-based national strategies merits our deep appreciation. That is probably the formula that should be used to translate the MDGs into reality. We must find a way to translate our common commitments and common obligations into national strategies and national commitments.

We share the Secretary-General's positive assessment of the concept of "quick wins" as being capable of bringing added value to our efforts in fighting poverty and hunger. But the key challenge will be to ensure their sustainability and effectiveness, taking into account their integration with long-term programmes.

It is also of key importance that the report addresses the issue of system-wide coherence. Progress in this area is particularly important, as the quality of operational and humanitarian activities on the ground provides visible proof of the efficiency and relevance of United Nations activities.

In my delegation's view, the part of the report devoted to freedom from fear requires our utmost attention. Poland is of the opinion that the international security system should be based on a new approach. Indeed, we have to recognize that a new paradigm of security has emerged, moving the centre of attention from the security of States towards the security of citizens — individual human beings — a shift from the concept of defending territory to that of protecting people. The principle of responsible sovereignty includes not only a State's privileges, but also its obligation to protect human rights, the rule of law, democracy and the welfare of its own people, as well as its obligations towards other States. Hence, we endorse the emerging norm that there is a collective international "responsibility to protect", exercisable by the Security Council, in cases when sovereign Governments have proved unable or unwilling to act.

Bearing in mind that the use of force is a very sensitive question, we emphasize that the core requirements of international law, as reflected in Article 51 of the Charter, should remain unchanged. However, the challenges we are facing today force us to formulate new ideas and thoughts, which could lead to a new interpretation of that concept. Poland considers the proposal to set out guidelines for the Security Council on the use of force to be promising. It is obvious to us that the proposed guidelines would be limited to the scope of competence of the Council and would not affect the use of force in general, in particular the right to self-defence.

Poland fully embraces the concept of collective security. In this regard, we support the recommendations on a new global antiterrorist strategy, comprising a definition of terrorism and a comprehensive convention to be adopted by the end of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly.

As to the section on freedom to live in dignity, we would like to express our gratitude to the Secretary-General, who acknowledged the importance of human rights and the rule of law not only as principles alone, but also a the main factor guaranteeing security and development. We note with satisfaction that, in his report, Kofi Annan underlined the role of the Community of Democracies, which was launched in Warsaw in June 2000 and which now comprises more than 120 States. In the past 60 years, we have seen many examples throughout the world of democracy becoming a necessary precondition for good governance and the rule of law. It is also a guarantee that standards of human rights and fundamental freedoms will be observed. Poland, for its part, is committed to continuing its involvement in promoting democracy and its values, as well as to strengthening and consolidating the Community of Democracies. In this regard, we would like to express our support for the creation of a Democracy Fund to assist those States that wish to be assisted in building up democratic Governments and societies.

Finally, I would like to make a few comments on institutional reform. As stated on previous occasions, Poland supports the comprehensive and urgent reform of the Security Council, including the necessary expansion of its membership in both categories. The Council must be more representative and, thus, more legitimate and effective.

In this regard, Poland does not favour any change in the nature and composition of the regional group system. We are convinced that, for the time being, one additional non-permanent seat on an expanded Security Council for the Eastern European Group seems to be a minimum in order to maintain balance and the fair distribution of seats.

Stressing the need to strengthen human rights within the framework of the United Nations, Poland tends to agree with the proposal to establish a Human Rights Council as one of the principal organs of the United Nations. In our view, it is necessary in such a manner to enhance the status of the issue. At the same time, we share the hope expressed by many delegations that we will soon receive more details on that proposal from the Secretariat. We await with equal interest the Secretary-General's elaboration of the modalities of the Peacebuilding Commission — a body very much needed in the United Nations system.

A few hours ago, millions of people gathered in Rome and around the world paid a final tribute to Pope John Paul II. His legacy is overwhelmingly rich and will remain with us for many years. One element of that legacy is his belief that a just international order should be based on values — values we all share, common values that transcend the divisions between continents and regions, divisions between religions and ideologies and other possible divisions. Those values should be at the core of the international system.

Two values in particular should be mentioned. These are freedom and solidarity: freedom in all its aspects, as skilfully described by the Secretary-General as freedom from want, freedom from fear and freedom to live in dignity. Solidarity too should be understood in a very broad sense, going far beyond what we conventionally associate with that word, which is usually used to mean financial or other economic assistance. Rather, it is solidarity with all those in need: with oppressed people and with nations struck by natural calamities, terrorist acts or other disasters.

The global order we are all striving to build should have a purpose; it should have a sound moral foundation. Pope John Paul II was a great believer in the United Nations. But we all know that the United Nations will be central to this new, emerging international system to the extent that it is able to embrace those values and place them at the centre of its activities. We must learn how to use the United Nations to advance freedom without imposing it, and to promote solidarity without relieving States of their responsibilities.

Human beings, the individual person, must be at the centre of our activities. That is ultimate measure of our success and the ultimate measure of our Organization's effectiveness. That may sound banal, but it probably makes sense to recall that simple truth from time to time because the exercise we are now embarking upon is especially important. For Poland, it is not just another summit. It is not just another political document that we will be drafting. The upcoming summit will be a very important test of our Organization's credibility and of our ability to adapt it to modern and future challenges. It will have deep implications for our future. That is why I am permitting myself to express the broader philosophy that guides Poland's position and its activities in this forum.

To recapitulate, the message I bring from Warsaw is very simple: Poland is ready to make a constructive and active contribution to the work ahead.

Mr. Vohidov (Uzbekistan) (*spoke in Russian*): Allow me at the outset, on behalf of the Government and the people of Uzbekistan, to express our profound condolences on the occasion of the passing of His Holiness Pope John Paul II, and on the occasion of the passing of His Serene Highness Prince Rainier III.

The delegation of Uzbekistan wishes to echo the words of appreciation expressed to Secretary-General Kofi Annan for his thoughtful report (A/59/2005), which contains a proposed plan of action to reform the system of multilateral relations for the twenty-first century. The report reflects a number of the conclusions and the approaches found in the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (A/59/565) and the report of the Millennium Project. It is a logical continuation of the comprehensive preparatory process for the upcoming milestone event, the September summit.

The Secretary-General's report contains a number of constructive proposals and recommendations for progress in three interrelated areas: development, security and human rights. We support the report's conclusion that this is a truly historic opportunity to strengthen States by mobilizing our collective efforts in those areas. The urgent need to reform the United Nations as the universal international organization requires us to coordinate our efforts.

In previous meetings of the General Assembly, Uzbekistan has already stated its views on a number of the proposals contained in the report of the High-level Panel (A/59/565) and the report of the Millennium Project and also reflected in the Secretary-General's

report. Our delegation will make further specific comments during the Assembly's thematic consultations.

I would today like to make some general comments. First, with respect to promoting development, we support the Secretary-General's proposals with respect to the obligations both of developing countries, which should be responsible for their own development, and of developed countries, which should assist the efforts to attain the Millennium Development Goals by increasing official development assistance, introducing development-oriented trade regimes and enhancing their debt relief measures. That balanced approach reflects our vision of how the issue should be dealt with.

Secondly, the report faithfully reflects the international community's concern at the lack of a collective vision for the elimination of threats. In that context, the Secretary-General's proposed new security consensus — that whatever threatens one threatens all — is in keeping with our view of how threats and challenges should be dealt with, as described by our President at the Millennium Summit in 2000 (see A/55/PV.7).

We believe, however, that the recommendations relating to the adoption of a Security Council resolution setting out principles for the use of force require further discussion, as do the principles themselves, because Member States are very concerned about that issue. Arriving at a definition of international terrorism — on which there is as yet no consensus — is equally important.

We are particularly pleased that, even before the beginning of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly, we have already implemented one of the report's recommendations: the Ad Hoc Committee on International Terrorism has approved the text of the draft convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism. The work done on the text by all delegations, especially the Russian Federation, which initiated work on the document, should be applauded.

We hope that the global nuclear non-proliferation regime will be strengthened with the entry into force of that convention and of a treaty establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia. We also hope that Member States will be able to overcome their differences relating to the provisions of a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism, and that we will adopt such a convention within the time frame proposed by the Secretary-General.

I would like now to comment on the recommendations relating to reform in the area of human rights. Uzbekistan supports the report's observation that one of the main purposes of the Organization is to protect human rights. Uzbekistan has consistently fulfilled its international obligations as a party to more than 60 international instruments in this area, including the six main ones. We believe, however, that there is a growing trend towards the politicization of human rights within the United Nations and a tendency for certain Governments to take a selective approach in dealing with human rights situations. We believe that that trend is having a negative impact on the Organization's principle of objectivity. In this context, we need to consider further the proposal to set up a Democracy Fund and to create a post of special rapporteur to report to the Commission on Human Rights on the compatibility of counter-terrorism measures with international human rights laws.

Of course, we must also ensure that reform of the Commission on Human Rights decreases politicization within that body. Ultimately, the purpose of such reform is to enhance the authority and professionalism of the Commission. We believe that we should give greater consideration to the High-level Panel's proposal to modify the Commission so as to give it universal membership.

As has been said during previous meetings, the institutional reform of the United Nations should, of course, take into account the Secretary-General's proposals in this area — proposals that we welcome.

With regard to the reform and expansion of the Security Council, we must, of course, keep in mind the need to enhance its authority and effectiveness, as well as the requirement to ensure that the countries of Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas are represented equitably in both categories of membership.

In conclusion, I would like to point out that all of the proposals in the report should be considered and implemented on the basis of the broadest possible agreement among Member States. We must ensure that all States are involved in the preparatory process, thereby ensuring a clearly defined and realistic agenda for the summit.

Mr. Baatar (Mongolia): At the outset, I would like to express the sincere condolences of my delegation to the Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See on the passing of His Holiness Pope John Paul II, and to the Permanent Mission of the Principality of Monaco on the sad demise of His Serene Highness Prince Rainier III. We share the grief expressed about the tragic loss of those two leaders.

Let me begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for having given us this opportunity to engage in yet another round of frank and open consultations in the lead-up to the September high-level plenary meeting. I also commend you for your leadership and for the exemplary manner in which you are guiding our deliberations. You can rest assured, Sir, of my delegation's full support and assistance as you carry out your important work.

My delegation broadly associates itself with the statements made by the representatives of Malaysia and of Jamaica on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77 and China, respectively.

The report of the Secretary-General (A/59/2005) is now being closely studied by the Government of Mongolia. I will therefore limit myself to making some preliminary remarks on issues of key importance to us. I will express the position of my Government in greater detail during the thematic consultations to be held by the facilitators later this month on the basis of the report's four thematic clusters. I will not repeat the views already expressed by my delegation during the previous round of consultations on some of the issues before us.

We consider the September summit to be a two-tiered event. The primary purpose is to conduct a thorough review of the state of the implementation of internationally agreed development goals, first and foremost the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), with a view to agreeing and making decisions on actions and commitments to fulfil those lofty objectives within the time frame that has been set out. The second purpose is to work out a common understanding of our collective response to new and old challenges posed to world peace and security, as well as of the reform of multilateral institutions, first and foremost the United Nations as the flagship, in order to make them more effective and relevant in dealing with the daunting tasks facing us today.

I am of the view that the Secretary-General has succeeded to a great extent in his task of presenting a balanced vision with regard to how to tackle the key concerns of the international community. Mongolia warmly appreciates the determination and commitment of the Secretary-General to better equip the world Organization to meet the challenges and threats of the new millennium, and it welcomes his comprehensive report as a sound basis for our further consultations and negotiation.

Mongolia fully supports the equal emphasis placed by the Secretary-General on three main areas: development, security and human rights. Indeed, human rights cannot be separated from development and security; they are intrinsically interconnected and mutually reinforcing.

My delegation attaches the utmost importance to development issues under "freedom from want" cluster. We believe that the Secretary-General has brought forward a series of important but achievable recommendations which, if realized, could galvanize the international community to meet the development challenges that confront mankind. It is now up to the Member States to respond by supporting the proposals and delivering the commitments.

The report emphasizes the urgent need for continued work towards alleviating poverty and meeting all of the agreed objectives of development embodied in the Millennium Development Goals. My delegation supports the Secretary-General's call for increased and more effective aid, openness to trade and improved governance, including respect for the rule of law, all of which Mongolia staunchly advocates.

We echo the report's call for all countries to fulfil their promises to achieve effective governance and to fully meet aid commitments, including — at least initially — a doubling of official development assistance and increased debt relief, as reflected in the Monterrey Consensus. We also support the report's call to build capacity in developing countries, to strengthen national strategies, to improve the climate for private investment and to increase investment in infrastructure to promote economic growth in developing countries.

Mongolia supports the vision of collective security presented in the report of the Secretary-General. The report contains a number of very important and far-reaching recommendations pertaining to the maintenance of international peace

and security that deserve our most serious consideration.

We support the comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy based on five pillars. It is reassuring that the Secretary-General's call to complete without delay an international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism has recently been met: the draft convention is to be adopted by the General Assembly in the very near future. It is my sincere hope that it enters into force in a most expeditious manner. In the same spirit of compromise and consensus, we should hasten our work on a comprehensive convention on terrorism so that we can adopt it before the end of the sixtieth session, thus further strengthening the international legal framework against terrorism.

The report reaffirmed once again the importance of progress and genuine commitment to disarmament and non-proliferation in the area of weapons of mass destruction. My delegation looks forward to the forthcoming Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which will provide us with a welcome opportunity to engage in in-depth consideration of ways and means to address the challenges posed to the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

The promotion of and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all were among the solemn purposes proclaimed by the peoples of the United Nations when they united in their resolve to create this world Organization. Those purposes, enshrined in the first article of the Charter, are what Member States are obliged to honour in serving their peoples' aspirations. Therefore, the attention given by the Secretary-General in his report to the issue of strengthening the human rights system and its institutional framework is most timely. It is worth noting that even the fundamental principles enshrined in the Charter are purpose-driven.

Mongolia, as host of the Fifth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies and as a participating State of the Community of Democracies, welcomes the importance attached to democracy in the report and the proposed Democracy Fund.

There are some perennial issues that have been the subject of endless repetition for many years. A few could argue, however, that such persistent repetition is in itself a worrying signal of something important left unattended — of work whose completion is long overdue. One of the most prominent examples of that is Security Council expansion, an issue that has been discussed by many delegations for more than 10 years. Here, let me repeat once again my country's position on that issue — a position that is well known to all members.

Mongolia has consistently stood for expanding the Security Council in a just and equitable manner by increasing the numbers of both permanent and elected seats while ensuring a just share of Council ownership for countries from both the developing and the developed worlds. The Secretary-General urged us, the Member States, to consider models A and B, proposed by the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, or "any other viable proposals in terms of size and balance that have emerged on the basis of either model" (*A/59/2005, para. 170*). In other words, the two models, A and B, are not presented as a take-it-or-leave-it package. It is gratifying to note that some States aspiring to permanent seats are now expressing their views on the possibility of making some modifications to the proposed model A in order to retain the existing regional group system or to increase the number of proposed non-permanent seats. Moreover, some States that had favoured model B have now begun to speak about an improved version of that model. My delegation welcomes such flexibility on both sides and hopes that Member States can find an acceptable formula. We stand ready to consider and support any proposal based on model A that enjoys broad consensus or at least the widest possible support among Member States.

In conclusion, let me stress my delegation's position that it is absolutely imperative to make the September high-level plenary meeting a genuine success. It is essential that the meeting put us on course to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and that it place the United Nations and its system on the surest possible footing for the twenty-first century. We may have differing national positions and differing perceptions on how to move forward; what we have in common is our shared goal to make our world a better, more secure, more just and more prosperous place.

Our work in the months ahead may be hard and painstaking and may seem to lead nowhere, but we must never forget that what we are doing is making every effort, to borrow the words of Secretary-General Kofi Annan, "to pass on to our children a brighter inheritance than that bequeathed to any previous

generation" (*Ibid., para. 1*). My delegation looks forward to engaging in constructive and open consultations before September in a spirit of compromise, mutual respect and understanding.

Mr. Tafrov (Bulgaria) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I should like to express, on behalf of my delegation, our most sincere condolences to the Mission of the Holy See and the Mission of Poland on the passing of His Holiness Pope John Paul II, one of the most important figures of the twentieth century and the first Slavic pope in the history of the Catholic Church, who was respected immensely in Bulgaria. I also express my most sincere condolences to the Mission of Monaco on the passing of His Serene Highness Prince Rainier III.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union and with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Estonia on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States, States which are eligible for election to a non-permanent seat on the Security Council.

I convey to the President of the General Assembly, my country's thanks for creating good conditions to discuss the Organization's future. Thanks to his energy and skill, the debate is shaping up well and promises to yield tangible results. My delegation will spare no effort in that regard.

Several days ago, the Bulgarian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Solomon Passy, met with Secretary-General Kofi Annan and expressed to him my country's full support for the Secretary-General's report "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" (A/59/2005). The Minister thanked the Secretary-General for his political and moral leadership at a crucial time for the Organization. Today, from this rostrum, I have the honour to reaffirm that firm support for the Secretary-General's activities and for his vision for the Organization.

Bulgaria unreservedly supports the philosophy of the report, concurs with its analysis of the challenges facing us and welcomes the solutions it proposes. It sets out a series of courageous and often innovative ideas concerning the future of the United Nations as a unique international Organization charged with promoting development and environmental protection, the maintenance of peace and the respect of human rights.

The Secretary-General emphasizes the interdependence of those three key areas. We welcome that approach, which is both far-sighted and realistic and will enable our debate to make progress towards reaching real solutions to real problems. Indeed, a great deal is at stake here. We have to take advantage of the dynamic process begun in recent months to set in stone the central role of the United Nations in the system of multilateral institutions. Of course, some of the recommendations made in the report must be further elaborated on, and that responsibility falls to us, the Member States. In the weeks and months to come, our peoples will be looking to us to preserve — even consolidate — the unified nature of our Organization and enhance the effectiveness of its actions.

I should now like to make some brief comments on the various chapters of the report, while reserving the right to go into these in greater detail at a later time.

As regards freedom from want, the delegation fully agrees with the in-depth analysis of the European Union. The Millennium Development Goals require political will on the part of developing as well as developed countries. Bulgaria, an acceding country to the European Union, is in the process of building its capacity as a future donor and is working on the creation of mechanisms for administering official development assistance.

My delegation believes that the institutional reforms proposed by the Secretary-General are in keeping with the ambitious goals that we have set. The idea of three reformed Councils — the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the new Human Rights Council — is perfectly in keeping with our view of the three top priorities for United Nations action — namely, development, security and human rights. It is important that reform establish a proper balance among these three principal organs while involving the greatest possible number of Member States in their work in a lasting manner.

Bulgaria, which in the past suffered at length from the damaging effects of totalitarianism on human rights, warmly welcomes the idea of creating a new Human Rights Council whose members would be elected by a two thirds majority in the General Assembly. Our country now abides by the most

rigorous and exacting standards in the areas of democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights. The mandate of this new Council should ensure that the United Nations accords the highest priority to human rights issues. Working in close cooperation with the Security Council, such a council could help to avert regional crises, especially internal crises, and also serve as an early-warning mechanism for crisis situations related to drastic and massive human rights violations. The role and responsibilities of the High Commissioner for Human Rights should further be clarified and strengthened. Finally, such a council should ensure a high degree of involvement in its work on the part of civil society organizations operating in that field.

In that context, my delegation believes that the implementation of the concept of "responsibility to protect" would represent a genuine step forward towards preventing genocide and other crimes against humanity. The Security Council must remain seized of the issue and must be able to take action in such situations, especially when national Governments are unable to provide even minimum protection for their citizens or when the situation in a country spirals out of control and there is no real leadership.

Bulgaria has previously expressed its support for the Secretary-General's idea to create a Peacebuilding Commission whose mandate would compensate for existing shortcomings in the current system. Such a mandate must be able to ensure that peace, once established in a region or a country, becomes irreversible. Indeed — and recent history has witnessed this repeatedly — conflicts that have been resolved sometimes break out once again, due to a lack of attention on the part of the international community to post-conflict situations, which are often characterized by fragile State institutions and a precarious economic situation. It is important that the Commission work together with the relevant principal organs of the United Nations and ensure greater coordination among them. As regards its composition, we believe that it should not replicate that of the Security Council.

Bulgaria has consistently viewed Security Council reform as only one aspect of overall United Nations reform. The importance of revitalizing the General Assembly cannot be overestimated, and the same applies to the Economic and Social Council and the Secretariat. Right now we all seem to be focused almost exclusively on Security Council reform, which is quite natural.

The position of Bulgaria and of the overwhelming majority of the members of the Eastern European regional Group is well-known. Any increase in the number of elected Council members must ensure a proportionally adequate representation of the Eastern European Group, which should be given at least one additional non-permanent seat. Our country is gratified by the fact that, in his report, the Secretary-General does not reiterate the idea of trying to merge the two European groups, as that idea was not a good one.

Given that neither model A nor model B take account of the proposal made by the Eastern European Group, my country deems them both unacceptable in their present form.

The Secretary-General's report has provided us with an excellent working tool, and Bulgaria is deeply grateful. In order to ensure a successful outcome to the pivotal September summit and, beyond that, a successful future for the United Nations and for multilateralism in general, we, the Member States, must make a significant effort to achieve the broadest possible agreement. But let us use our imagination. Let us be creative. Let us act. Can we reconcile vastly divergent viewpoints? Can we envision reaching broad agreement, or even a consensus? Are such aspirations realistic? As an answer to those questions, I will quote Jean-Paul Sartre, who, addressing students at the Sorbonne in 1968, said: "Be realistic; demand the impossible".

Mr. Kazykhanov (Kazakhstan), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Mr. Hurree (Mauritius): My delegation associates itself with the statements made by the Chairperson of the Non-Aligned Movement, the Chairperson of the Group of 77 and China, the Chairperson of the African Group for the month, and the Vice-Chairperson of the Alliance of Small Island States.

We appreciate the opportunity of this informal consultation on the report of the Secretary-General entitled "In larger freedom: towards development, security and Human Rights for all" as we embark on serious preparations for the September 2005 high-level event, wherein Member States are being called to, indeed, take bold actions.

My delegation associates itself with other delegations in expressing our thanks to the Secretary-General for the timely presentation of the report, which has enabled States Members of the United Nations to engage in a meaningful and constructive interaction aimed at ensuring that a decisive outcome is reached at the September 2005 high-level event. We see that event as a crucial opportunity.

My delegation expresses its sincere appreciation to the President for his presentation of a road map for general and thematic consultations throughout April and May with a view to Member States reaching agreement on a draft outcome document. My delegation also wishes to salute his constant commitment to a preparatory process to be conducted in a transparent, open and inclusive manner and pledges its support to him and the facilitators who have been appointed to make a constructive contribution.

My delegation wishes to underscore its understanding that the primary focus of the September 2005 high-level event, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 58/291 and 59/145, is to review implementation of the Millennium Declaration, including the Millennium Development Goals, and the integrated and coordi implementation of the outcomes of major Un ations conferences and summits.

In February 2005, my delegation commended the Millennium Project team for the enormous effort they put into developing a practical plan to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. While some of the recommendations of the Millennium Project report have been highlighted in the report of the Secretary-General, we are hopeful that during the consultations and the preparatory process, we will be able to revert to some of the proposals and recommendations of the Millennium Project report that are not highlighted in the report of the Secretary-General but which are equally crucial to the successful achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

The Millennium Declaration emphasized the special needs of Africa. However, five years later, despite the commitments of the international community and the existence of various policies and programmes to promote social and economic development, Africa remains at the epicentre of the crisis in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The challenges of poverty eradication, sustainable development, debt cancellation, improved market access, enhanced official development assistance, increased flows of foreign direct investment and the fight against HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases are indeed enormous for the continent, and those challenges need to be addressed in a comprehensive and holistic manner.

My delegation is of the view that during the preparatory process we should adopt a clear approach for translating long-stated commitments into appropriate and reliable means of implementation. Development is at the core of the African continent's concerns, and we therefore believe that urgent action-oriented proposals and recommendations on development issues are warranted.

My delegation wishes to recall that although the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) has been widely welcomed by the international community as Africa's development platform and has been endorsed as such through General Assembly resolution 57/2 of 2002, difficulties are still being experienced in mobilizing domestic and external resources to make the Partnership operational and achieve the strategic objectives it sets out. We see the preparatory process for the high-level event as a renewed opportunity to address the main constraints and agree on clear operational means of implementation to ensure concrete and effective support for NEPAD.

With respect to the financing of official development assistance, the Millennium Project report notes that we would still have a financing gap even if existing commitments for financing official development assistance were met over the next five years. The challenge rests in finding additional resources and devising innovative sources of financing, such as the proposed International Finance Facility for the front-loading of official development assistance and other proposed financing mechanisms; these matters need to be appropriately addressed.

My delegation equally welcomes the Secretary-General's call for the Doha round of multilateral trade negotiations to fulfil its development promise and for the negotiations to be completed no later than 2006. My delegation wishes to reaffirm that it is important for the development dimensions of the Doha round of negotiations to be fulfilled. We also stress the need to establish meaningful synergy among the Bretton

Woods institutions, the United Nations system and its agencies and other development agencies to assist developing countries in augmenting their capacity to increase their share of world trade, as a necessary path to prosperity.

With respect to institutional reforms, my delegation shares the view that the primary objective of the bold reforms should be to enhance the Organization's capacity to deliver effectively and its ability to meet the shared vision and aspirations of its membership and improve the daily lives of the people whom this supreme body directly serves throughout the world. My delegation looks forward to meaningful and constructive discussions during the preparatory process so that the United Nations will be effectively endowed with what it needs to tackle the challenges it faces on various fronts.

With respect to Security Council reform, my delegation reiterates its firm conviction that a reformed Security Council should be based on wider representation, transparency and equitable geographical distribution, with the inclusion of developing countries from Africa, Asia and Latin America. My delegation associates itself with the African Union's Ezulwini Consensus for full representation of Africa on the Security Council. Africa should hold not less than two permanent seats, with all the prerogatives and privileges of permanent membership, including the right of veto, as well as five non-permanent seats. My delegation has long advocated the expansion of the permanent membership of the Security Council, and the accession of India to the status of permanent member. In addition to the enlargement of the Security Council, my delegation believes that work remains to improve the Council's working methods and enhance its accountability and transparency.

The Mauritius International Meeting for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States produced the Mauritius Declaration and the Mauritius Strategy for implementation. However, we wish to add our voice to the concerns of other small island States, noting that the Secretary-General's report makes only general references to small island developing States. As can be recalled, the Mauritius International Meeting significantly advanced recognition of the fact that such States require special treatment because of their structural handicaps and inherent vulnerability and the fact that one size does not fit all.

The Secretary-General's report does not address the January 2005 Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, adopted as a blueprint for action-oriented, concrete and practical measures to address the areas of concern to those States, as identified in the Barbados Programme of Action, as well as new and emerging issues. Thus, we are hopeful that the specific challenges faced by small island developing States will be equally addressed in the preparatory process and in the high-level event and its outcome document.

Allow me to underline that small island developing States will continue to contribute effectively in the consultations and discussions leading up to the September 2005 high-level event. Given the opportunity, small States too can play a meaningful role; the presidency of the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly was dignified testimony of that.

To conclude, my delegation firmly believes that the aspiration to build a strengthened and more effective United Nations to better serve "we the peoples" of the world is legitimate. We strongly favour reform of the United Nations, with the objective of enabling this world body to meet the challenges it faces in a more efficient way. It is incumbent upon all States Members of the United Nations to ensure that the ideals and targets we set for ourselves are met and implemented.

Mr. Requeijo Gual (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation associates itself with the condolences expressed in this Hall on the passing of His Holiness Pope John Paul II and of His Serene Highness Prince Rainier III of Monaco.

We associate ourselves with the statements made by the Permanent Representative of Malaysia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and by the Permanent Representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. Many of the ideas our delegation expressed during the consideration of the reports submitted by the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (A/59/565) and by the Millennium Project are also relevant to this debate.

I should like to begin by saying that the report of the Secretary-General (A/59/2005) attempts to establish a new approach to organizing international life, one which relegates to a secondary level the current foundation of the role of the United Nations

under its Charter, using the argument that we are now living in a qualitatively different time. However, although conditions are different today, it is more imperative than ever before to safeguard the positive elements of the existing system, which is a result of humanity's historical evolution.

Some of the changes proposed in the report would risk creating a far more insecure and unjust system that would be subject to manipulation by the powerful. We must not forget that we live in a unipolar world whose super-Power has violated international law with impunity and attempts to manipulate international organizations, including the United Nations.

Cuba understands that reforms of the system are needed, but not along the lines proposed in the report. My delegation would therefore be prepared to analyse various proposals, without unnecessary haste, so that our decisions reflect the consensus of Member States on the basis of well-founded, measured and objective analysis.

We reiterate that we must, without further delay, face up to real and comprehensive United Nations reform that goes back to the Organization's foundational roots, preserves its universal and democratic nature, its political essence and its intergovernmental nature, respects the balance of the functional competencies of its main bodies and ensures full respect for its Charter by all States, small and large. Such reform should re-establish the Organization's central role in the system of international relations, should ensure that the Charter and international law prevail, should rebuild the collective security system and guarantee the development of multilateralism and should reaffirm cooperation and solidarity among States. In our opinion, the report does not take duly into account the mandates provided by resolutions 58/291 and 59/145, whereas it goes beyond the powers that the General Assembly has granted to the Secretary-General.

Placing development unequivocally and definitively at the centre of the Organization's agenda should be one of the main results of the September 2005 summit. That principle, mentioned repeatedly since the beginning of this preparatory process by the bloc of developing countries that constitute the majority of Member States, seems to have been sidestepped once again in the approach taken in the Secretary-General's report.

We have noted with deep concern the lack of due balance in the document, which results in an excessive emphasis on the subjects of security and human rights, to the detriment of issues of development in all their aspects and dimensions, which seem subordinated to those other issues. That shortcoming is even more grave if we consider that the original mandate for the report's formulation stipulated that it should be exhaustive — in keeping with the scope of the event that we will be celebrating — and that it must include, in addition to a broad assessment of the progress made in implementing the Millennium Development Goals, an analysis of the results achieved in the integrated and coordinated implementation at the national, regional and international levels of the outcomes and commitments of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related areas.

Another of the report's basic limitations is that it analyses the developing world's problems in a conceptual vacuum and clearly ignores the fact that the fundamental causes of underdevelopment and poverty arise from the unjust system of international economic relations currently in force and from the regrettable lack of real political will on the part of developed countries to change it and to implement measures truly aimed at promoting sustainable development, eradicating poverty and eliminating the unfairness of the present order.

We are also concerned by the excessive way in which the report addresses concepts such as good governance, democracy and accountability in referring to supposed requirements that should be met by developing countries — levelling explicit criticism at those countries. Further, we are disturbed by the manner in which this document sets out the premises for future conditionalities in the granting of official development assistance on the basis of unacceptable subjective criteria of selectivity.

We should continue to demand the strict implementation of the commitments undertaken by developed countries in the area of development assistance and cooperation. The Development Goals cannot be achieved without first carrying out an in-depth, bold and frank analysis of the root causes of our problems. We must agree on sufficiently comprehensive recommendations aimed at, inter alia,

reforming the current system of international trade and financial relations, and we must adequately rethink reform of the United Nations system in order to respond to the problem of development, which is undoubtedly our greatest challenge.

Despite the fact that peace is the central concept of the United Nations Charter, it is practically ignored in the report. On the other hand, the report promotes the concept of security, which is more vague and makes the Charter's centrality less clear. The report attempts to invent a set of controversial concepts while ignoring basic principles of international law such as sovereignty and non-intervention in internal affairs or subordinating them to the implementation of supposed principles of the defence of human rights, individual freedom and protection of the vulnerable.

Moreover, the document makes scant and controversial references to sovereignty, while it seems to call into question the fact that the United Nations is basically an intergovernmental Organization to defend States. It thus attempts to eliminate the central elements of the system and of international public law: State sovereignty and equality among States.

We reiterate that the proposal to make the collective security system more effective through a greater strengthening of the Security Council, at the cost of a decrease in the role of the other principal organs — particularly the General Assembly — is inappropriate. The Security Council must not be transformed into a body in which texts are adopted whose scope is similar to that of international treaties.

The Charter must be fully respected, not reinterpreted. In that regard, the report's perspective on Article 51 represents a dangerous reinterpretation of that Article — one that would give it sufficient flexibility to allow wars and preventive attacks, which, despite the fact that such wars and attacks are unleashed by the global super-Power, are nonetheless illegal and reprehensible. We therefore reject the attempt to broaden the scope of the Article to include the question of so-called imminent threats. Not only would that weaken multilateralism; it also runs counter to the basic principles contained in the Charter itself.

In the report, the subject of nuclear weapons and of other weapons of mass destruction is taken up basically from the perspective of horizontal non-proliferation, erroneously relegating to a secondary level the question of disarmament, which is, in fact, the fundamental and priority issue. It is deeply regrettable and disturbing to see that the report welcomes the so-called Proliferation Security Initiative, which is a non-transparent mechanism of selective composition, created by just a few States, that acts outside of the United Nations and outside of the scope of the relevant international treaties.

Furthermore, with respect to the question of small arms and light weapons, illegal and legal weapons appear to be dealt with in the same manner. That fails to take into account the right of all States to possess small arms and light weapons in order to meet their legitimate defence and security needs.

The Cuban delegation reiterates that the fight against terrorism must be waged in a comprehensive and global manner, on the basis of collective cooperation and in the framework of respect for the Charter of the United Nations and of the principles of international law, in particular international humanitarian law and human rights.

It is vital that a comprehensive convention on international terrorism be adopted and that it contain a clear and precise definition of the crime of terrorism, including all of its forms and manifestations, setting out the material and mental elements of the crime and the responsibilities of both natural and legal persons.

Likewise, activities by State armed forces that are not governed by international humanitarian law should not be excluded from the scope of application of the future comprehensive convention, and a clear distinction should be made between terrorism and the legitimate struggle of peoples for their independence and in defence of their right to self-determination. It is up to Member States to determine which elements should be contained in the definition of terrorism.

In the report, the subject of human rights is considered in a narrow framework, and an attempt is made to relegate the role of States to a different level in order to create a conceptual basis for justifying intervention and violations of their sovereignty.

The Commission on Human Rights has lost prestige because of the political manipulation, selectivity, politicization, double standards, blackmail and hypocrisy of a group of developed countries, whose sole objective is to realize their own political interests. Nonetheless, instead of suggesting any real democratization of the Commission or greater

transparency in its work, the report proposes the creation of a Human Rights Council with a limited membership, in order to make it even more likely that the very organ that is designed to ensure cooperation in the area of human rights will be used as the private property of the powerful and as a tribunal of inquisition to condemn the countries of the South, particularly those that actively oppose their strategy of neocolonial domination.

The strategy of those that support this approach is clear: to eliminate the Third Committee of the General Assembly, a universal body in which all Member States exercise their sovereign equality in the consideration of human rights in the general context of other social, cultural and humanitarian aspects.

In addition, separating the Commission on Human Rights from the Economic and Social Council would weaken the consideration of economic, social and cultural rights. That would once again call into question the very existence and recognition of such rights, ignoring the principle of the universal, interdependent and interrelated nature of all human rights. Any approach that gives priority to one variable of the equation to the detriment of the others can lead only to a greater distortion of the system, to more extensive questioning of the system, and to further political manipulation.

Let me also recall that in recent years the Organization has been considering a proposal to assume the so-called collective "responsibility to protect". However, far from garnering support, that proposal has generated strong resistance within a key group of States Members of the Organization.

When the illegal war against Iraq broke out, some of the most ardent defenders of the so-called "responsibility to protect" decided to remain silent, while others allied themselves with the attacker. As a result, hundreds of thousands of Iraqi civilians died in a cruel attack. Nor did such defenders blink an eye when we learned of the indescribable torture committed in the jails of Iraq and Afghanistan and at the Guantánamo naval base.

Once the conflict had broken out, a number of defenders of the concept of the "responsibility to protect" hindered consideration of the humanitarian situation in Iraq in the Commission on Human Rights. They opposed the adoption of a draft resolution that would have led to an investigation of arbitrary detentions at the illegal United States naval base at Guantánamo. In the framework of the 2004 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council, they voted against the adoption of a text that appealed for prisoners not to be tortured in the name of the fight against terrorism.

It would be suicidal to endorse the so-called right to intervention, which so often has been used in recent times in the context of a unipolar, neo-liberal global order — characterized by the existence of an economic and military dictatorship exercised by a super-Power — in which attempts are made to impose a single social model; in which there is a "nuclear club"; in which preventive wars are promoted; in which double standards predominate, as in the work of the Security Council; in which some have disdain for the General Assembly; and in which we see a proliferation of unilateral, coercive measures and a policy of selective manipulation as concerns human rights.

Having examined the proposals contained in the report regarding institutional reform, my delegation would like to make the following comments.

We will not be able to speak of a United Nations whose action is more democratic and effective so long as the General Assembly does not fully exercise the powers given it by the Charter — including those that necessarily must come into play in the event of paralysis in the Security Council — to reject the use of force in the attainment of political objectives and to insist that only a peaceful solution of disputes and the elimination of double standards can bring about security, stability and justice in the world. Increased effectiveness in the work of the General Assembly will depend more on the political will of Member States than on changes in its methods of work. The continued presence of certain items on the agenda is due, above all, to the fact that the relevant resolutions have not been implemented.

As for the Security Council — a body which is neither democratic nor equitable nor duly representative — the report focuses basically on the question of its expansion. However, Council reform cannot be limited to that aspect, but, rather, must be comprehensive. It is vital to transform that organ's methods of work in order to ensure effectiveness and appropriate transparency. Likewise, there must be effective accountability on its part and on the part of its members, in particular to the General Assembly, in

which all Member States have a voice and a vote. Until the final objective of the elimination of the veto is achieved, as a first step it is necessary to limit the veto to actions taken under Chapter VII of the Charter.

Our delegation is aware of the need for a more competent and effective Secretariat. That is why we believe that General Assembly decisions with respect to human resources and with respect to the review of the implementation of resolutions 48/218 B and 54/244 should be duly implemented. We do not believe it is necessary to modify those decisions, which were adopted following intensive intergovernmental negotiations during which proposals contained in the report received thorough consideration. In our view, that would be to ignore the decisions taken by Member States following exhaustive analysis of these questions, with the aim of adopting decisions in a more general content.

We reaffirm the General Assembly's prerogatives and mandates to consider all administrative and budgetary matters, including its absolute authority to allocate and redistribute financial and human resources and to set the Organization's priorities.

Furthermore, in spite of our appeal in prior consultations, we have noted that high officials of the Secretariat continue to make statements outside United Nations Headquarters in which they endorse concepts and ideas that have not yet been agreed to or accepted as valid by the States Members of the Organization, which is a political institution and which must not be viewed as a corporation. Such conduct must be put to an end.

It is up to Member States, in the framework of the General Assembly, to adopt the necessary decisions after holding the relevant negotiations and as part of an open and transparent deliberative process, mindful of the fact that reform is a gradual process that cannot be restricted to a single event. In that context, we insist that the opinions put forward by the Non-Aligned Movement and by the Group of 77 and China must not go unheeded, as they represent the views of the majority of the States Members of the Organization. With regard to the present process of consultations and having heard the diversity of opinions expressed by preceding speakers, I request that the President schedule additional days for thematic consultations, as the number of days currently scheduled is insufficient.

I wish to conclude my statement by reaffirming our support for the President and wishing him every success in his work.

Ms. Gallardo (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me at the outset to express, on behalf of the Government and the people of El Salvador, and on my own account, our most sincere and most heartfelt condolences to the Holy See on the passing of the Supreme Pontiff, His Holiness Pope John Paul II. We also express our condolences to the Government and the people of the Principality of Monaco on the passing of His Serene Highness Prince Rainier III.

With respect to the items under consideration today, we thank the Secretary-General for his efforts in the preparation and the presentation of his report entitled "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" (A/59/2005), in which he offers for our consideration his vision of the vital aspects of the international agenda.

We shall have to take a stand on those views, and our heads of State or Government will do so at the high-level meeting to be held in September 2005. We believe that although the Secretary-General's report may not be exhaustive, it is, we stress, an important reference point in our progress towards the reforms needed by the United Nations. We associate ourselves with the statements made by Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and by Argentina on behalf of the Rio Group.

In connection with the report's proposals grouped under the subject of "freedom from want", the Government of El Salvador reaffirms its commitment and political will to implement the pledges it made at the International Conference on Financing for Development and at the World Summit on Sustainable Development. We also reaffirm that national Governments bear primary responsibility for development and that this responsibility should be complemented, inter alia, by creating a favourable international economic environment that includes an open trade system better oriented towards development, that brings debt relief to developing countries, that promotes domestic and foreign public and private investment and that strengthens international partnerships not only among countries but also among international intergovernmental and non-governmental agencies.

For the Government of El Salvador, it is important that the Secretary-General's report recognizes that the Millennium Development Goals are not in themselves a complete development programme. Rather, the Goals are part of a broader development programme. Further, we must note that the Goals do not address the special needs of the medium-income developing countries. My Government endorses the Secretary-General's recommendations for developed countries to fulfil their pledged commitments, in particular by becoming genuine allies for development through the establishment of specific timetables to achieve the target of allocating 0.7 per cent of their gross national income to official development assistance by 2015. At the same time, we congratulate and thank those countries that have already achieved that target.

It is our hope that the Doha round of multilateral trade negotiations of the World Trade Organization will be completed in 2006 through the firm will of the parties and their understanding that the negotiating process should result in benefits for all.

We reaffirm that the international community must urgently provide the resources needed to strengthen the response to the challenge of HIV/AIDS.

The Government of El Salvador reaffirms its commitment and its political will to fulfil the commitments undertaken in the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action and to implement the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly.

We also reaffirm our commitment to promote and join in the international effort to mitigate climate change, in particular following 2012, bearing in mind the principle of shared but differentiated responsibilities. We agree with the Secretary-General about the importance of the phenomenon of migration and its critical impact on the economic, political, social and cultural spheres in many of our countries. Accordingly, we reaffirm our firm support for including the question of migration among the priorities of the United Nations agenda in the twenty-first century.

My Government supports the proposal to create a humanitarian fund as a mechanism for the rapid disbursement of resources to meet the immediate needs resulting from humanitarian crises and to help the victims of unexpected disasters. We also support the establishment of a global early warning system, and we reaffirm the need for developed countries to strengthen by means of advanced systems the capacities and the national programmes of developing countries.

In connection with the proposals contained in the cluster "freedom from fear", the Government of El Salvador joins those that support multilateralism, in particular the strengthening of the collective security system based on the Charter. We agree with the Secretary-General about the need to adopt a broader concept of collective security that encompasses traditional threats and new threats resulting from armed conflicts, transnational organized crime, terrorism and the structural problems of poverty, infectious disease and environmental deterioration.

In connection with international terrorism, my Government agrees that it has an impact on the security and stability of peoples and Governments. We therefore support efforts to develop and adopt international instruments that can fill the existing gaps in that field and allow us to obtain a complete international legal system in order more effectively to fight a scourge that affects us all. In that regard, we welcome the recent conclusion of the draft international convention on the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism, and we hope that we shall be able by the end of this year to conclude the negotiations for the adoption of a general convention against terrorism.

With respect to nuclear weapons, we also agree that the non-proliferation regime is at a critical point. Since it is the cornerstone of denuclearization, we believe that Member States — and in particular the nuclear-weapon States — have a special responsibility in the maintenance, strengthening and attainment of the objectives of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, including the commitment to maintain the moratorium on nuclear testing and to provide security guarantees for the non-nuclear-weapon States.

With regard to the non-proliferation regime, we believe that Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) is a commendable initiative for considering the problem of the acquisition of technology, nuclear materials or weapons, and other weapons of mass destruction by non-State agents. Nonetheless, we believe that, in accordance with the Charter, the Security Council has no mandate to legislate. Even so, the resolution could be a good basis for launching a process of negotiation

that might conclude with the adoption of an additional protocol to that end.

Furthermore, until the final objective of the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction is achieved, we will continue firmly to support the recommendation that States, particularly producing and exporting States, create effective controls over the production and export of technologies, weapons of mass destruction and all types of related materials that could be used illicitly by non-State actors, and that they establish closer relations and links to coordinate activities in that field. They should also consider the possibility of giving the Organization the mandate to oversee the implementation of commitments undertaken by the States involved.

As for small arms and light weapons, we agree that they have an impact on aspects of the security and stability of nations. We believe that they are more dangerous and more harmful than weapons of mass destruction. We concur that the progress achieved in the implementation of the Plan of Action adopted in 2001 should be complemented by further efforts to strengthen the agreed mechanisms and measures, including support for the prompt conclusion of a binding international instrument in that regard, particularly with respect to the marking and tracing of such weapons in order to prevent, counteract and reduce their illegal transfer.

In connection with the use of force, we share the opinion that the United Nations Charter contains provisions that are a good foundation for its regulation. In El Salvador's view, force should not be used, except in self-defence, without the Security Council's authorization.

As to Security Council reform, the Government of El Salvador believes that it falls within the broader context of collective security. We cannot fail to lament the fact that, for more than 10 years now, it has proven impossible to reach consensus on substantive changes regarding the structure and procedures of the Security Council or to achieve the general agreement necessary to that end. We recognize that the process of reforming the Security Council is complex and difficult as a result of Members' diversity of views on that issue.

The Government of El Salvador feels that it is important to support greater efforts and flexibility on the part of the States most concerned in the substantive reform of that organ so as to achieve the broadest possible agreement on advancing the process of making the Council more democratic, transparent and representative, especially in its decision-making process.

El Salvador believes that the role of the General Assembly must be revitalized and that it must receive a broadened mandate so that it can participate with greater resolve in the political issues critical to the world agenda, particularly when the Security Council finds it impossible to take action or to demand the implementation of its decisions as a result of the use of the veto privilege. We believe that the revitalization of the General Assembly will be possible so long as it can evolve from a deliberative and legislative organ with no binding authority into one with greater participation and decision-making on security, allowing it to reflect a better balance in the exercise of power and decision-making within the United Nations structure.

In connection with the proposals clustered under the heading "Freedom to live in dignity", the Government of El Salvador reaffirms its commitment to human dignity, the strengthening of the rule of law, democracy, freedom, human rights, social justice and the building of a culture of peace. We also support the events to be held in 2005 for the signing and deposition of instruments of ratification of or accession to multilateral treaties, which are now in the process of internal consultations on contributions to that purpose.

In connection with the proposals clustered under the heading "Strengthening the United Nations", the Government of El Salvador believes that the most important aspect of the reform of the Economic and Social Council is the identification of the main areas in which it enjoys comparative advantages. Such comparative advantages are related to the promotion of a debate on international economic cooperation policy and emerging development issues. In that framework, we should promote greater coherence, coordination and cooperation within the United Nations system and in the follow-up to the activities of its major conferences.

We believe that a better relationship should be promoted between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. In that regard, we must take up the proposal to create a peacebuilding commission, since the possible establishment of such a body would require clearly defined functions and powers for the Economic and Social Council with respect to the ad hoc commissions.

The Government of El Salvador expresses its special interest in the creation of the peacebuilding commission as an institutional mechanism for closing the gap between the areas of security and development, ensuring that the prevailing situation in a given country can be approached in a comprehensive way. To that end, a planning mission should include various national intergovernmental agents, as well as representatives of the donor community. We believe that the peacebuilding commission must be related both to the Security Council and to the Economic and Social Council. It must also enjoy the specialized support of the Secretariat, combining experience in the field and technical capacities. It must also be composed of Member States chosen by the General Assembly.

It is our understanding that the mandate of a peacebuilding commission must be limited to the pre-conflict and peacebuilding phases. At issue is the creation of institutional mechanisms for preventing the outbreak of violence, forestalling its resurgence and promoting reconciliation and the reconstruction of the social fabric. In other words, the commission should have the capacity to promote what we consider to be a culture of peace. Furthermore, States emerging from conflict that would be subject to the commission's activities should be represented in it. Other States with relevant experience, based on situations from which they have emerged should also have a place on the commission.

In conclusion, I reiterate my Government's commitment and political will to make progress in the complex yet desirable process of reform. We wish to participate in a constructive and flexible spirit, convinced that the changes achieved should allow us to adapt our Organization to the challenges that lie ahead in the new millennium.

Mr. Kariyawasam (Sri Lanka): It is with deep sorrow that my country learned of the passing away of His Holiness Pope John Paul II, who eloquently expressed loving kindness, compassion and sympathy to the world as a messenger of peace. We recall with reverence the visit of the late Holy Father to Sri Lanka in 1995. I wish to join other delegations in sharing in the grief and expressing our deepest condolences.

Also, may I convey our deepest sympathies to the people and the Government of Monaco on the demise of His Serene Highness Prince Rainier III.

My delegation is pleased that we are meeting in the plenary of the General Assembly to discuss the report of the Secretary-General entitled "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all". It is our expectation that this meeting will engender a series of meetings and consultations on that important issue. By the nature of the issues involved, it is evident that this will be a painstaking process that requires broader and deeper consultations and, indeed, reflection. My delegation wishes to congratulate the President of the General Assembly on convening this meeting soon after the presentation of the Secretary-General's report. That, no doubt, will facilitate reaching agreement by the time we meet at the summit level in September.

My delegation would like to associate itself with the statements made by the representatives of Malaysia, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and of Jamaica, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

As the President of my country, Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, stated at the last general debate of the General Assembly, Sri Lanka recognizes the need for comprehensive reform of the United Nations to render it more responsive to the needs and aspirations of all its Member States. In that regard, she stated that we look forward to the recommendations of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change appointed by the Secretary-General. We are pleased to note that not only is the report of the Secretary-General a product of the process that was initiated at the Millennium Summit, but that it has also drawn inspiration from the 16-member High-level Panel, as well as the expert contributions of the Millennium Project.

The United Nations will reach the milestone of 60 years of existence this year, five years after the Millennium Summit. The world that existed at the infancy of the United Nations in 1945 has changed today beyond recognition. Such changes include major political realignments, an unprecedented evolution in socio-economic relations, and exponential advancement in technological capacities. Consequently, new realities now encompass the globe, including both developed and developing countries. The United Nations therefore must reflect those current economic, social and political realities if it is to function effectively. To that purpose, it is essential that the United Nations improve its working methods, which will also enhance transparency and

inclusiveness. The United Nations must, once again, rededicate itself as a peoples' Organization that is relevant to the peoples of the world.

In that context, my delegation wishes to congratulate the Secretary-General on presenting his report for consideration by the States Members of the United Nations. The recommendations contained in the report require careful consideration and bold decisions. The issues reflected are very important, but complex, and the title of the report describes it all. It is a laudable attempt to address a set of issues that include well-being and development, peace and security, the dignity of the person, and human rights. Those issues, since time immemorial, have inspired humankind to seek solutions, since they relate to core matters of human existence. We are heartened by the way in which issues have been titled and delineated in the report. For instance, the concepts of "freedom from want", "freedom from fear" and "freedom to live in dignity" have been enshrined in many religious philosophies as noble pursuits, and emulating those age-old concepts in our efforts could act as a catalyst. To facilitate the United Nations efforts to help humankind achieve those valuable goals, the Secretary-General suggests several means under the title "Strengthening the United Nations".

However, it is essential that the reform process, first and foremost, strengthen the United Nations ability to deal with the issues related to the development needs of developing countries. It is fundamentally important not to treat development as secondary to security, human rights or the rule of law. Our main tasks in September need to be the review of the progress of the Millennium Development Goals set in 2000 and the creation of a development-oriented trading and financial system.

It is therefore important that we focus on the issue under the heading "Freedom from want" as a matter of priority, recognizing that the overwhelming number of people in the world still live in poverty and are in want of the basic human needs for their existence. That freedom is most essential and fundamental for human beings to enjoy other freedoms, such as the freedoms from fear and to live in dignity.

Sri Lanka is pleased that a recommendation made by the Secretary-General in his report under the heading "Preventing catastrophic terrorism" is already on the way towards adoption by the United Nations. I refer to the recent adoption of the text of the draft international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism by the Ad Hoc Committee established under resolution 51/210. Sri Lanka was privileged to chair the Ad Hoc Committee that finalized the draft convention and it is our hope that Member States will work with similar enthusiasm and dedication with a view to concluding a comprehensive convention on terrorism before the end of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly, as recommended by the Secretary-General.

My delegation also welcomes the approach outlined by the Secretary-General on the issue of combating terrorism. Access by non-State actors to weapons and the illegal trafficking of weapons, in our view, are now becoming a greater threat to security and peace. Setting up mechanisms to control the illicit transfer of those weapons and means for their financing are urgent tasks for the United Nations family.

All proposals in the report require in-depth study and response. We agree with the Secretary-General that the issues contained in the report should not be treated as an à-la-carte menu. However, we also recognize that, in any menu, there will be an appetizer before the main course. Hence, there may be some issues that take precedence over others in the process of implementing reforms, since discussion and deliberation on such issues have been sustained over a long period and have matured enough for speedy decisions and perhaps implementation.

In that context, and in recognition that the United Nations is primarily a political Organization and that the Security Council is its leading organ for action, it may be possible to bring an immediate focus on the reform of that organ, since it has received our attention for a long period of time. We recognize that, in its composition, the Security Council does not reflect current geopolitical realities. It was in that context that, at the last general debate of the General Assembly, my President expressed her concern over the lack of progress on the question of equitable regional representation and the increase in the membership of the Security Council in both the permanent and non-permanent categories. The President also expressed support for the candidatures of Brazil, Germany, India and Japan for permanent status in an expanded Security Council. She also stated that Sri Lanka would like to see consensus emerging on permanent representation for Africa in the Security Council and that Africa must

be included when a final determination is reached on the future composition of the Council. Sri Lanka therefore views the approach reflected in model A of the Secretary-General's report as the way forward in finding a solution with regard to the expansion of the Security Council. We hope that the segment relevant to non-permanent representation can be appropriately developed so that it represents the interests of a large majority of Member States.

It is a source of concern that the Secretary-General's comprehensive report does not make substantive reference to issues pertaining to migrants, in particular migrant workers. Owing to the ongoing globalization process, the twenty-first century is becoming a century of migration as large numbers of people cross State boundaries seeking work and reunion with their families. Issues regarding their well-being and their human rights can no longer be kept on the back burner. The Secretary-General himself has taken up that issue and has encouraged discussions at a high level. Nevertheless, in his report, issues pertaining to migrants are not directly reflected in the section entitled "Freedom to live in dignity". The issue must therefore receive greater attention in our deliberations with a view to making recommendations at the September summit.

I should like to compliment the President on his initiative to create four clusters of issues and to appoint facilitators for the work in that regard. It is our belief that the list of issues identified for the four clusters is not exhaustive and that it will be supplemented as the discussions proceed. It is our desire to further discuss those issues in detail, providing fresh inputs, when the deliberations proceed. Whatever measures we agree on for implementation in the United Nations reform agenda must enjoy legitimacy and broad-based support if they are to be effective and universally respected. Therefore, it is best that we work towards building consensus on all issues.

We are on the brink of a historic opportunity, and therefore of a challenge. We owe it to the international community at large to rise to the occasion and make the sixtieth-anniversary summit a harbinger of change that will provide socio-economic advancement, peace and security for all peoples, whom the United Nations has been mandated to serve. In that endeavour, we simply cannot fail.

The Acting President: I should like to inform members that there are still 21 speakers on my list. Members will recall that the President informed the Assembly yesterday that he hoped to conclude the discussion today. He also appealed to Member States to make their statements as concise as possible. It will therefore be appreciated if the remaining speakers kindly assist in that regard by summarizing their statements and circulating the full texts to delegations.

Mr. Nguyen Duy Chien (Viet Nam): Last January and February, under the skilful guidance of the President of the General Assembly, Member States had a fruitful exchange of views on the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (A/59/565) and the report of the Millennium Project. Now, as we embark on the second phase of the preparations for the high-level summit in September, the delegation of Viet Nam is deeply convinced that the President will continue to lead our discussions to a successful conclusion. Our delegation wishes to thank the Secretary-General for submitting to the General Assembly his report entitled "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" (A/59/2005).

Viet Nam associates itself with the statements made by the Permanent Representative of Malaysia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and by the Permanent Representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

The report of the Secretary-General contains many ideas and recommendations. A number of the recommendations are useful; other recommendations require thorough discussion. We all agree on the interconnectedness of development and security, which in turn dictates balanced measures. As far as development is concerned, the recommendations to set a timetable for donors to reach the official development assistance (ODA) target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income and to launch an International Finance Facility in 2005 to support the immediate front-loading of ODA go in the right direction. However, more concrete and accelerated action aimed at implementing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is needed. While developing countries take steps to adopt national development strategies based on the MDGs and scale up investment to achieve them, developed countries should honour their commitments to provide unfettered development assistance and to create the conditions necessary for goods from

developing countries to gain access to their markets. We concur with the assertion that balanced and equitable international trade is one of the important ways to assist the developing and least developed countries in achieving the MDGs. It is also necessary to ensure the entry of developing countries into the World Trade Organization as a step towards the universalization of that organization's membership.

With regard to security issues, we agree that continued efforts are required to deal with the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. At the same time, it should be pointed out that focusing only on proliferation measures is not justified. We are convinced that the international community has the obligation to address in a most balanced manner issues related to both nuclear disarmament and proliferation.

The very existence of nuclear weapons today constitutes a serious threat to international peace and security. That demands that the international community's efforts aimed at non-proliferation be parallel to nuclear disarmament efforts. It is urgent to implement the 13 steps agreed upon at the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons with a view to accomplishing the goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Viet Nam condemns all acts of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. We are convinced that the fight against terrorism can be won only through comprehensive and balanced measures that are carried out in full conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and in accordance with international law, in particular the relevant international conventions. We therefore support and encourage all endeavours aimed at the early conclusion of negotiations within the framework of the working group established to finalize a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

We also wish to stress the necessity of upholding the rule of law at both the national and international levels. At the international level, that requires that the principles and purposes of the Charter and other basic principles of international law be strictly respected. Those principles include territorial integrity, national sovereignty, non-interference in the internal affairs of other States and the peaceful settlement of disputes. Force can be used only as a last resort and under the authority of the Security Council to maintain or restore international peace and security, in accordance with the provisions of Chapter VII of the Charter, after all peaceful means provided for in Article 33 are exhausted.

Article 51 of the Charter is clear and restrictive in the sense that the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence can be employed only if an armed attack occurs against a Member State. We do not believe, therefore, that Article 51 provides an expanded scope for permitting States to take military action on the basis of a perceived imminent threat. Nor are we convinced that responsibility to protect is an emerging norm of international law.

The rule of law means also that the creation of international legal obligations for States, including making necessary amendments to existing agreements and conventions, can be performed by and with the participation of States, according to international treaty law. States are under obligation not only to respect but also fully to implement all of the commitments they have undertaken under international treaties and agreements.

Concerning institutional reforms, Viet Nam reaffirms its position that reform of the Security Council is only a part of the United Nations reform process. In that context, measures to restore the authority of the General Assembly and to make the work of the Economic and Social Council more effective are indispensable. We agree with the view that the intergovernmental nature of the General Assembly should be preserved in order to ensure that it remains essentially a forum for intergovernmental dialogue. We have always supported, and continue to support, all efforts aimed at making the Security Council more representative, democratic, effective and transparent. Genuine reform of the Security Council will be complete only when it encompasses both an increase in the Council's membership and an improvement in its working methods. The use of the veto power should be limited and eventually eliminated.

These are some our general comments relating to agenda items 45 and 55, which are important items. We will make concrete contributions at a later stage when we deliberate on specific clusters.

Mr. Toro Jiménez (Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, we wish to express the condolences of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

to the authorities of the Vatican and the Holy See as well as to Catholic peoples the world over. We also express our condolences to the head of State of Monaco and to his family on the passing of Prince Rainier, as well as to the people of Monaco.

We acknowledge the effort and interest that the Secretary-General has devoted to the preparation of this report. However, we believe that the extremely broad scope of his responsibilities may have made it easier for the Secretariat's bureaucrats and experts to leave on the report the deep imprint of those Powers that are interested in maintaining the unjust and anti-democratic order created by the most powerful to the detriment of the vast majority of the Members of the United Nations.

We support the statements made earlier by the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77 and China, as well as the institutional and collective statements made by the fraternal countries of the Andean Community of Nations and the Rio Group. Nevertheless, in connection with the statement made by the Rio Group yesterday on the subject of democracy, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela wishes to add that it views democracy solely as a universal value in the immediate, direct and simple sense of government exclusively by the people, and in no way as the so-called representative democracy that the imperial Power is attempting to impose on a global scale, in contravention of the principle of the self-determination of peoples.

We wish also to highlight the special constitutional nature of the Venezuelan State as a popular and participative democracy. Furthermore, we reiterate our conviction that it is the exclusive right of all peoples to decide for themselves which political institutions will govern them. That right cannot be usurped or confiscated either by the international community or by any State or international organization.

We would like, at this stage, pending a more careful and detailed analysis of the individual issues, to make a few preliminary comments on a subject that deserves extensive consideration and deliberation on the part of the Assembly: the report of the Secretary-General.

When we began our consideration of the report of the High-level Panel and that of Professor Jeffrey Sachs, published in recent months, it was our hope that the report of the Secretary-General would accurately reflect the state of affairs within the Organization and contribute, in a well-thought-out manner and with a sense of fairness and justice, to the establishment of a genuine balance, thereby overcoming the unjust inequality prevailing in this universal body — an inequality that is reflected in the reports mentioned earlier, in their ideological underpinnings and in the proposals they contain. That was the very least we had hoped for. But, unfortunately, our hopes have not been realized.

We wish therefore to convey our distress; indeed, we find the report of the Secretary-General disappointing. Drafted exclusively from the standpoint of the powerful, it reflects only the goals, intentions and interests of the latter, sugar-coated with a rhetoric which, for us, the countries and peoples of the South — the decisive majority in the Assembly — speaks of selfishness, disdain, incomprehension and lack of interest. But the most serious thing is that the report, if approved, would further accentuate the imbalances that serve as its reference point and its starting point. If accepted, its recommendations would propel us towards an outcome that is even more unjust and far removed from the balance that we are calling for in terms of our rights, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and reflected in the Millennium commitments — in other words, the self-determination of peoples and the right to development and to social inclusion.

Not only are we disappointed; we cannot but see the report as hostile towards us, the countries and peoples of the South. Its sole response to our legitimate aspirations is to give a generalized and indifferent nod in our direction with respect to social and economic development, with the same paternalistic attitude that characterizes the ideology and practices of powerful States, and a definite sense of ultimatum, as it provides its recommendations on a take-it-or-leave-it basis, with arrogance and disdain, giving us orders as to what we must and must not do.

Having made those general comments, I would like to point out that the report's proposals do no more than confirm and support those contained in the reports of the High-level Panel and of Professor Jeffrey Sachs. Stated in the clearest terms, they represent an obvious attempt to transform the United Nations reform effort into a macro-political instrument of the manipulative unilateralism of the dominant Powers — the oligarchy

of global hegemony that seeks to further weaken the Organization and its principles, purposes and raison d'être, with a view to creating a disproportionate, unbalanced and dangerous concentration of power in the Security Council aimed at conferring legitimacy on those who actually work to the detriment of the functions of the General Assembly, disregarding that body's responsibilities in the area of the maintenance of international peace and security, as provided for under Articles 10, 11, 12, 14 and 35 of the Charter.

Given the attempt to impose, in the name of multilateralism, a course of unilateralist action in which the major Powers are finding it increasingly difficult to disguise their motives, we are becoming involved in an operation aimed at minimizing the representative and democratic normative character of the General Assembly in order to reduce it to a vegetative state with a purely formal level of existence, its functions constrained by the Security Council, suffocated and drowning in a sea of non-governmental organizations with claims to sovereignty that are trying to join the Assembly on behalf of a supposed "international civil society", which, as we all know, is just one of the masks worn by the imperial Power and its allies. All of this is disguised by carefully designed terminology — so-called agreed language.

Furthermore, the report of the Secretary-General is full of traps threatening the security of our States and the survival and self-determination of our peoples, who, let us not forget, constitute a majority in this Hall. A few eloquent examples will suffice to illustrate my observations.

The first relates to the Secretary-General's recommendation, in paragraph 7 of the annex to the report, that the so-called international community — a euphemism for the major Powers and their representatives — should shoulder the "'responsibility to protect' as a basis for collective action against genocide, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity". This "responsibility", which is a pretext for interfering in the internal affairs of States — the weak ones, of course — applying double standards and concealing unmentionable motives, must, according to the Secretary-General, be given to the Security Council so that it can adopt coercive measures against the States — States of the South — which, on the basis of the views of just a few, would be stigmatized as systematic violators of collective human rights and punished through "humanitarian intervention". We can see clear examples of that today.

The second example is the Secretary-General's proposal to create a Peacebuilding Commission, a bureaucratic apparatus, with its headquarters in the Secretariat, that, according to the recommendations, would be composed of nothing more or less than a sub-grouping of the members of the Security Council. The philanthropic institutional task assigned to that body would be to carry out the work of rebuilding the economies and political institutions of a State deemed to be a "failed" State. Haiti is one current example of such a situation.

It is no coincidence that, in July 2004, a special office was established within the Department of State of the United States of America to deal with situations strikingly similar to those that the Peacebuilding Commission would address. According to a *Le Monde* article written by a New York-based correspondent and published on 29 March, a secret list has been drawn up of 25 countries Members of the United Nations — a significant percentage of the current 191 Members. They are weak, failing or collapsed States that are potential targets for intervention — including military intervention — to be "reconstructed" by the international community, with the support of the United States, among others, in blatant violation of the right of peoples to self-determination. That is another form of "humanitarian intervention" with which the Organization may have to contend.

The third example is the Secretary-General's proposal to legitimize and transfer to the Council the right to decide when there are latent threats to international peace and security — the task of carrying forward the "preventive war" aspect of the Bush doctrine, conferring legitimacy on it under the multilateral system, and opening the way to the use of force against any target that the Department of State decides to include as part of the "axis of evil".

Furthermore, we should not ignore the Secretary-General's proposals relating to the General Assembly. They are covered by the appealing mantle of "revitalization". But, beneath the superficiality of the comments that have circulated to date, that revitalization effort actually proposes taking away from the Assembly the competences conferred upon it under the Charter. Thus, the Security Council's de facto usurpation of the powers of the Assembly would

continue unchecked and, together with other manipulative undertakings, would weaken the Assembly, which should be the true decision-making body, since it is the only organ in which all Members of the Organization are represented. The green light has been given, for example, to the report of Fernando Henrique Cardozo, which, if approved, would literally flood the General Assembly with non-governmental organizations of every type, including those most representative of the interests of the imperial Power, on behalf of a vague and ambiguous "international civil society" invested with equal decision-making powers — private organizations that would only contribute to eroding State sovereignty, as exercised in the General Assembly.

Finally, in order to deliver the coup de grâce to this collective, fundamental and democratic organ of the United Nations, machinations and conspiracies have been under way since the Warsaw and Seoul conferences of 2000 and 2002, respectively, to create an organization dubbed the Community of Democracies — a strange hybrid of intergovernmental institutions and non-governmental organizations. Having remained latent for a number of years, it is now being transformed at a high speed into a real alternative to, or a replacement for, the United Nations in the medium term, or a Trojan horse designed to split the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77 and China, which, as everyone knows, represent the majority of the States and peoples in the Assembly.

The Community of Democracies, which the Secretary-General has not only given his blessing to but also encouraged a financial basis for so as to make it part of the United Nations, is already beginning to show its teeth, establishing within itself a consultative body to determine which States meet the criteria, set by the caucus, qualifying them as democracies. The intention, of course, is to control their conduct through repressive intervention in the interests of a model of democracy conceived in the United States.

I must make a brief reference to the position of the Secretary-General regarding human rights suggesting that structural changes be made before the September summit.

As to the proposals relating to the reduction in the membership of and structural changes to the Commission on Human Rights, we cannot join in the negative criticism that has been levelled against the credibility of the current body. The Commission on Human Rights continues to be distorted by opportunistic political factors. The big Powers seek to use it to the detriment of the rights of the developing countries, which they selectively accuse of violating human rights with a view to interfering in their internal affairs. That perverse concept of policy violates the purposes and principles of the United Nations and the sovereignty of States.

It would be advisable to effect a change in the policy of that body that would lead it soundly and constructively to promote and stimulate cooperation with Member States that request it in that regard. We would be inclined to favour the universalization of the Commission's membership or, failing that, to maintain the status quo.

As for terrorism, we advocate finding a definition satisfactory to everyone, covering State terrorism and drawing a clear distinction between terrorism and the legitimate resistance of peoples to dictatorship, invasion or foreign occupation, including that which is perversely cloaked in the guise of opportunistic and convenient multilateralism.

We must prevent all attempts to impose decisions on this Assembly. The first such attempt — which, while more apparent than others, is still covert and little known — is the agenda of the road map communicated by the President of the General Assembly, whereby changes in the Security Council's structure would be effected after the September summit. Nothing could be more manipulative or unjustified. It is an ambush, attractively disguised. We also believe that structural changes in the Security Council must be effected simultaneously with or subsequent to changes leading to the fulfilment of the commitments of the Members of the Organization regarding the economic and social development of the States and peoples of the South.

With respect to disarmament, we differ on the approach of the Secretary-General regarding the priority of the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Complete disarmament through the destruction of those weapons will always be our objective.

We note that, despite the fact that the Secretary-General's report ignores the needs of the so-called middle-income countries, to which we Latin Americans belong — countries that also suffer from hunger,

poverty and social exclusion — we are pleased that the brotherly peoples of Africa are given the urgent attention they deserve by dint of the very serious problems they face.

Given the very discouraging imbalance of the institutional proposals in the Secretary-General's report on transformation within the Organization, we believe that the countries and peoples of the South need to adopt an independent position and path that reflect our beliefs and our capacities to redress the very deep and untenable imbalance affecting our institution. We must let our thinking and our actions mature, free of all haste and fear in the face of the claims of the powerful.

Lastly, we are convinced that the Secretary-General, in all good faith, has taken a wrong turn. That must be the case because, as the national of a country that is a member of the majority in the General Assembly, and someone who has often demonstrated his social sensitivity and commitment to those who are excluded throughout the world, he is a natural ally of all international struggles for freedom and social justice.

Mr. Rock (Canada): I first want to record Canada's sorrow at the death of His Holiness Pope John Paul II. Our Prime Minister is today at the Vatican, joining leaders from around the world as humanity mourns the loss of that remarkable messenger of peace.

I also want to extend, on behalf of Canadians, our sympathy and respect to the people of Monaco on the death this week of His Serene Highness Prince Rainier III. For half a century, he reigned with commitment and with wisdom, and he has left a legacy of achievement and of progress.

Late last month, the Secretary-General presented us with a bold and concrete set of proposals to strengthen the United Nations. In so doing, he launched a process of reform that will succeed only if we are prepared to understand the positions of others and to make genuine compromises in our own. That will not be easy — it never is — but it holds the only real prospect for shared success.

One of the advantages of speaking at this point in this series of plenary meetings is that Canada has had the benefit of listening to so many thoughtful speeches made by others, and listening to others — listening with care and with respect — is going to be essential if we are, in the months ahead, to find common ground on the many issues before us. Canada listened carefully as our colleague, the Permanent Representative of Colombia, noted during her speech that consensus — consensus arrived at by showing respect for the views of all parties — has been a key element in the way the United Nations has functioned for 60 years. Let us not now forget the importance of consensus.

Although the Secretary-General's report is broad and comprehensive, we should not hesitate to consider additional valuable ideas brought forward by Member States during the speeches delivered over the past two days. Some of our colleagues have made thoughtful interventions about matters not raised in the Secretary-General's report but that merit careful consideration. For example, the Permanent Representatives of Indonesia, Nigeria and Uganda spoke convincingly about the importance of strengthening and rejuvenating the Economic and Social Council, of its central role in the social and development agenda — and we agree. Several Permanent Representatives, including those of Algeria and Peru, spoke of the importance of technology transfer, that those who have access to modern technology must find appropriate ways to share those tools of the future with the rest of the world so that opportunities can be shared as well — and we agree.

Those and other valuable proposals should be carefully considered and, above all, let us recognize that no person and no country has a monopoly on sound and useful ideas. Let us show an openness to fresh approaches and new ideas as a hallmark of our work.

Let me now reflect briefly on the key principles according to which the Secretary-General's report has been organized.

We first welcome the emphasis the Secretary-General has placed on development in his report. Surely, all Member States share the same objective to see results on the ground that make a real difference in the lives of people everywhere. Canada is encouraged by the strong reaffirmation of the partnership for development elaborated in the Monterrey Consensus as the basis for our cooperation in attaining the Millennium Development Goals. We agree that much more must be done for them to be attained, that time is of the essence, that action not rhetoric is required, and that what is done must be done better so that people

can live in freedom from want. Canada is wholly engaged in and sincerely committed to that historic project.

We also note that threats to health can have a direct influence on the economic welfare of States and on their capacity to function well. Public health is of concern to both developed and developing nations. We therefore welcome the Secretary-General's proposals for infectious-disease surveillance and monitoring, and we support his call for the adoption of the International Health Regulations by the World Health Assembly this May.

Canada also strongly supports the Secretary-General's recognition of the close interrelationship among development, security and human rights, firmly placed in the context of the rule of law. We welcome the call to implement a new security consensus based on that recognition and on the need for a collective system of security to deal with the full range of threats that exist in today's complex world.

We support the Secretary-General's call for a comprehensive United Nations approach to terrorism and for the ratification and implementation of the international counter-terrorism treaties. The recent completion and imminent adoption of the draft convention on nuclear terrorism demonstrates that we can reach agreement on those issues. Let us build on that success and press ahead with a comprehensive convention against terrorism.

We also strongly urge members of the Security Council to adopt guidelines on the use of force, which will serve to strengthen the Council's authority, its effectiveness and its transparency.

(spoke in French)

In recent years, the Organization has been faced with an ever-increasing need: to undertake complex peacekeeping or peacebuilding missions in States emerging from conflict. The United Nations has had to struggle with the gaps existing in the transition between conflict and development. Canada supports the excellent proposals to strengthen the United Nations peacebuilding architecture, which will help us to fill those gaps. We encourage the Secretary-General to set up a Peacebuilding Support Office, and we support the creation of a Peacebuilding Commission that would have direct links to both the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. The recommendations in the area of peacebuilding — particularly the creation of a Peacebuilding Commission — are the object of a growing consensus. We must make every effort to ensure that our leaders will be in a position to establish such a commission in September.

(spoke in English)

Canada's support for the principle of the "responsibility to protect" is well known. Indeed, Prime Minister Paul Martin made that responsibility the focus of his address from this rostrum last autumn (see A/59/PV.5). We fully support the Secretary-General's strong endorsement of the responsibility to protect, and we hope that leaders will do the same in September. At the same time, we have listened carefully as some Member States have expressed concern or caution regarding that responsibility. Canada respects the sincere expressions of concern that we have heard, and we look forward to frank and open discussions with colleagues on this subject. We believe that a full and objective assessment of the responsibility to protect will respond to the concerns that have been expressed.

Unless we ensure respect for human rights and strive to achieve gender equality, we will not be able to achieve our objectives of security and sustainable development. If there is to be freedom from fear and freedom from want, there must also be freedom to live in dignity. We must bring our commitment to human rights to all aspects of the work of the United Nations. To help us do so, institutional change is required. In that respect, Canada believes that human rights should occupy the prominent place envisioned by the very words of the Charter. Therefore, we support the creation of a Human Rights Council.

Finally, we must allow the Secretary-General to bring much-needed changes to the way in which the United Nations is managed. We wholeheartedly agree with the Secretary-General that the United Nations "can and must be a representative and efficient world organization, open and accountable to the public as well as to Governments" (*A/59/PV.83, p. 3*).

Sixty years ago, in the shadow of two catastrophic wars, the nations of the world created this institution in the hope that it would preserve peace and avoid further conflict. The Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted shortly afterwards, reflect the hope, the

resolve and the ideals of that era. Now, 60 years on, we have been called upon to show similar resolve by renewing our institution in a way that remains true to its founders' purpose. While much has changed in the years since the Organization's creation, and while the United Nations has not always fulfilled our expectations, the hope and the ideals that inspired its founders remain just as alive and just as needed today as they have ever been. As we turn to the important work that now lies before us, let us commit ourselves to do in our generation what they did in theirs and, through our efforts, to leave this a better and safer world.

Mr. Penjo (Bhutan): Allow me to thank the President for convening the present meetings. The road map that he has drawn up is a clear reflection of his strong desire to guide the preparatory work for the summit in a deliberate, open, transparent and inclusive manner. For small delegations like mine, these meetings provide a good opportunity to participate and contribute to that process.

My delegation would like to offer comments and views on some aspects of the Secretary-General's report (A/59/2005), which, together with the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (A/59/565), the report of the Millennium Project and the contributions of Member States and groups, provides a good basis for us to work towards an outcome in September that will be reflective of and responsive to the demands of the current time.

The Secretary-General has rightly emphasized that there can be no development without security and no security without development, and that both development and security depend on respect for human rights and the rule of law. The interconnectedness of development and security is beyond question, and the two issues must therefore be treated in an equitable and balanced manner.

As was pointed out by the Chairpersons of the Group of 77 and China and of the Non-Aligned Movement in their statements on Wednesday (see A/59/PV.85) — with which we associate ourselves — a better balance could have been obtained in the Secretary-General's report if issues of development had been given as much prominence as security issues. It is important to ensure that the outcome in September does not result in a similar imbalance. We must not lose sight of the main objective of the summit, as set out in resolution 58/291.

Issues pertaining to development are of primary importance to my country. Representing a least developed country, my delegation is deeply concerned that the challenges and problems faced by the least developed countries and by other disadvantaged groups received little attention in the Secretary-General's report. With more than a quarter of the Member States in that category, the goal of a just and equitable world order cannot be achieved without addressing the special needs of least developed countries. It is my delegation's hope that the case of the least developed countries will feature significantly in the outcome in September.

My delegation supports the timetable proposed by the Secretary-General to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance by 2015. We hope that the developed countries will meet that timetable. We also hope that the progressive increases proposed will mean that the least developed countries will receive 0.2 per cent of those countries' gross national income, as agreed in the Brussels Programme of Action.

The issue of Security Council reform has been before us for more than a decade, and discussions on it have been intense and difficult. That reflects, on the one hand, the great importance Member States attach to the work of the Security Council and, on the other, the urgent need for the Council to be reformed.

In my delegation's view, the arguments for reform outweigh difficulties in reaching consensus. If consensus is not reached, another opportunity will be missed, and the situation will remain as it is. Given that scenario, my delegation supports the Secretary-General's call to take a decision on the issue before the September summit. All aspects of Security Council reform must be included, including the Council's working methods and composition. Small States that cannot hope to be directly involved on the Council can identify themselves with its work only if it is carried out in a transparent manner and if the Council is made accountable to the entire membership.

Our support for taking a decision this year also stems from our understanding that reform is a continuous process and will remain a regular feature of deliberations at the United Nations. That is particularly true with respect to the Security Council, whose work

is closely observed by all Member States. Any decision arrived at this year should continue to be subject to review and further adaptation. In that regard, a review clause should be included in our decision this year.

As we have stated before, my country believes that reform of the composition of the Security Council should include the expansion of its membership in both the permanent and the non-permanent categories. Given the current absence of any alternative models or proposals before the Assembly, my delegation is of the view that the report's model A would better serve the interests of our membership. That model provides for an expansion in the permanent category to include new members particularly from the developing world and would thus bring into the decision-making process countries more representative of the broader membership.

With respect to the permanent category, we are convinced that India and Japan, by virtue of their contributions to the United Nations and their capacity to contribute effectively to the work of the Council, deserve to be members with the same level of privileges and responsibilities as the current permanent members now possess. We also support the membership of Germany and Brazil, as well as the representation of Africa in the same category.

With regard to the reform of the other principal organs of the United Nations, my delegation would like to reaffirm that serious efforts must be made to revitalize the General Assembly and restore its important role as the supreme deliberative body of the United Nations. In that regard, we must rationalize the Assembly's agenda and working methods to ensure that our annual deliberations yield meaningful and tangible outcomes. Given the linkages between security and development, it is also imperative to enhance the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council in a manner that allows for a better division of labour and that mutually reinforces the roles and the functions of those two principal organs.

In the same vein, the Economic and Social Council must be strengthened so that it can effectively fulfil its role as the central body for policy coordination and implementation of commitments to achieve the goals and objectives in the social and economic fields.

Mr. Aho-Glele (Benin) (*spoke in French*): First, we would like to express our sincere condolences to the international Catholic community on the passing of His Holiness Pope John Paul II. We would also like to express to the Principality of Monaco our condolences on the passing of His Serene Highness Prince Rainier III.

On behalf of the least developed countries, we would like most sincerely to congratulate the President on the transparent and inclusive manner in which he has organized the present meetings, which involve all members, each with its specific concerns.

The Secretary-General's report (A/59/2005) submitted for the Assembly's consideration is very bold and eye-opening, and it addresses very relevant issues faced by our world today. We take this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General and to congratulate him on this courageous initiative inspired by a desire to bring about ambitious reform of the United Nations so that it can implement a programme of action for the twenty-first century.

Today, the group of least developed countries will basically limit its assessment of the report to the sphere of development. Like the Secretary-General, we recognize that development, security and human rights are linked. We also agree with him that developed countries that have undertaken or aspire to undertake international responsibilities, in particular on the Security Council, should be judged by their contribution to the goals of the United Nations, in particular the development goals, including the allocation of 0.7 per cent of their gross national income to official development assistance to developing countries. Here let me place special emphasis on the allocation of 0.15 to 0.2 per cent of gross national income to official development assistance for the least developed countries.

When we talk about development, the focus is on developing countries in general and on the least developed countries in particular, which are recognized by the United Nations as the most vulnerable segment of the international community. Thus, we welcome the fact that the issue of the least developed countries is now a priority of the United Nations agenda. In that respect, paragraph 15 of the Millennium Declaration (resolution 55/2) took into consideration the specific needs of the least developed countries and welcomed the proposed Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, for which it set out clear and specific guidelines to ensure its success.

In September 2005, political leaders of the entire world will meet in New York to assess the progress made since the adoption by all States of the Millennium Declaration in September 2000. At that time, we will be able to assess the progress made towards development.

Here I must point out an important and very serious omission in the report which could undermine its coherence, the depth of its analyses and even its relevance with respect to development. Indeed, there is no specific mention of the progress that has been made in terms of the Millennium Development Goals as concerns the least developed countries.

In that respect, it must be stressed that the Brussels Declaration, which emanated from the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, is and remains the specific and concrete reflection of the Millennium commitments undertaken with respect to the least developed countries.

Indeed, in the Brussels Declaration, the States that participated in the Third World Conference on the Least Developed Countries stated that they were "Guided by the principles set out in the Millennium Declaration and its recognition that we have a collective responsibility" (*A/CONF.191/12, fourth preambular paragraph*).

Thus, as stated in its paragraph 5, the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries is based on

> "the international development targets, actions by the least developed countries and commensurate support measures by their development partners, and on the values, principles and objectives of the Millennium Declaration. These political, economic and social objectives, and other objectives of the United Nations and, as appropriate, other United Nations targets are incorporated into the commitments of the Programme of Action" (*A/CONF.191/11*).

It would have been desirable if the report had clearly indicated the effective and relevant correlation between the Millennium Development Goals and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries, given that the Programme of Action is a specific reflection of the Millennium Goals for the least developed countries.

The least developed countries do not believe that there are two separate ways of assessing the progress made towards the achievement of the development objectives — that is to say, one for the Millennium Goals themselves, and another for the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries. We believe that the one and only approach that should be taken in assessing the progress made towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals for the least developed countries is to take stock of the implementation of the Programme of Action.

We look forward to welcoming the positive initiatives and decisions to be taken by world political leaders in September 2005 for the attainment of the development goals contained in the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries.

Against that backdrop, the least developed countries are prepared to make their contribution.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.